

MASONIC BUILDING
1257 Liberty Street



ca. 1910

The Myrtle Lodge, oldest of the Masonic groups, was founded on February 21, 1858. Around the turn of the century the Lodge purchased this structure using the second and third floors for their many activities.

Street level storefronts housed various businesses over the years: Bensinger, Smith & Co. (books and stationery); C. H. Harris Shoe Store; F. W. Woolworth Five and Ten and Thrift Drug Store. Eclectic in design, this is one of Franklin's finest Victorian era commercial buildings.

RAYMOND BUILDINGS

1251 – 1253 Liberty Street



Revitalization projects in the 1980s tried to rejuvenate some of the old-fashioned storefronts. Behind these modern facades are the possible remains of one of the oldest sites in the downtown area. It was here in the very early 1800s that William Raymond built his family residence and mercantile shop. In recent times various businesses occupied these ancient walls such as confectionaries, cafés, the National Market, Wayne's Market and Chuck's Boot Shop.

DODD-OSMER BUILDING

1249 Liberty Street



This turn of the century building was erected in the 1880s for Samuel C.T. Dodd, a prominent Franklin attorney who drafted the Standard Oil Trust. James H. Osmer and sons later used the building for their law offices. For almost 60 years Jerome Silverman's clothing store provided generations with the latest in lady's fashion

FRANKLIN TRUST BUILDING GREEN BLDG./ BIERY BLDG./ LIBERTY BLDG.

1241 – 1247 Liberty Street



Comprised of many Classic Revival details, this 1907 building was the location of the Franklin Trust Co. and the Franklin Post Office.

News-Herald – Sept. 20, 1924 – “A new fire escape has been added to the building of the Franklin Trust Co., leading down into Pennsylvania Ave., or the Post Office alley. The device will give still further security to other occupants of a structure whose steel frame, tiled halls and other details of fireproof construction are of the most modern type of business architecture.”

BLEAKLEY BLOCK
1233-1239 Liberty Street



Illustration by Ashley Semenak
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Built in 1878 for James Bleakley whose earliest years were devoted to the establishment of a local newspaper called the Democratic Arch. In 1864 he was instrumental in the development of the First National Bank and later the International Bank. Since that time this ornate building has seen many changes. In 1906 Limber Brothers Bakery occupied the right storefront. Excited residents welcomed the J.C. Penney Co. department store in 1923 and continued to serve the residents of Franklin until its move to the mall in Cranberry Township. Another pleasant memory of days gone by is the Isaly's Dairy and the skyscraper ice cream cones.

THE INTERNATIONAL BANK / HILEMAN-DAFFINS

1231 Liberty Street



The 1879 History of Venango County records that on this site Jacob Dubbs built a log structure where he lived and kept a store. Jacob's daughter, Elizabeth was born in that cabin in 1823 and later married James Bleakley. In 1868 Bleakley established the International Bank and at that time this building had three floors with a capstone dated 1846.



BARROW-CIVIC THEATRE AND LITTLE THEATRE

1223 – 1225 Liberty Street



In 1913 – 14 an open-air structure named the Park Theatre was located on this site. A roof was added later but in 1944 fire destroyed the building. The Kayton Entertainment Co. owned the site and by 1946 had rebuilt the movie theater. By 1973 the theatre was sold and became the Re-Arm Sports Center. The Franklin Civic Operetta purchased this Moderne style building in 1989. Hard work and community support contributed to Franklin having one of the finest art and entertainment centers in the area. The Little Theatre was once a favorite drug store and soda fountain operated by the McGuire Family.

UNITED STATES HOTEL BUILDING

1213 – 1221 Liberty Street



Major George McClelland, a noted military soldier who fought in the Mexican and Civil War was born here in 1819. By 1830 Edward Pearce was landlord of the 'Rising Sun'. Last known as the United States Hotel, **John Wilkes Booth** roomed and dined here during his oil speculation days. This site has been occupied by various business enterprises from a very early period. Last renovation as a hotel probably occurred in the early 1860s, but it is said that under the siding there is a cornerstone marked 1806. Today the upper floors are vacant and various business establishments have occupied the first floor areas.

SITE OF THE PLUMER-HANCOCK BLOCK

Corner Liberty and Twelfth Street



The Boston Garden Restaurant occupies a portion of the site once known as Plumer - Hancock Block. Arnold Plumer acquired this property in 1833 and in November of 1868 he opened this three-story “flat iron” building. Banks, grocery stores, restaurants, drug stores, music stores and Western Union Telegraph offices once occupied the storefronts. Attorneys and insurance agencies leased office space in the upper two floors. A fire in 1981 destroyed the



Illustration of the Plumer – Hancock Block by Ashley Semenak
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